

- (V) Claims 53 to 69 ("Group V"), drawn to a method of gaming wherein chips have multiple sides and points are associated individually with each of the positions, and wherein the points for positions occupied by at least one of the first side and second side chips are accumulated.
- (VI) Claims 70 to 85 ("Group VI"), drawn to a method of gaming wherein chips have multiple sides and points are associated individually with and accumulated for at least one of the first side and second side chips that are placed onto positions of the board.
- (VII) Claims 86 to 96 ("Group VII"), drawn to a method of gaming wherein chips have multiple sides and a plurality of different points are provided with the first side chips prior to placement of the chips, and wherein a player can selectively place first side chips with certain amounts of points onto desired positions.

Applicants hereby elects Group I, Claims 1 to 20, with traverse, for examination on the merits. Applicants reserves the right to file one or more divisional applications directed to the non-elected claims.

The Restriction contends that the species of Groups I to VII are independent or distinct because claims to the different species recite the mutually exclusive characteristics of such species. The Restriction further contends that these species are not obvious variants of each other based on the current record. Applicants respectfully disagree with and traverse the Restriction of Groups I to VII as patentably distinct species for at least the reasons set forth below.

Applicants submit that, due to the similarities of the claims of at least Groups I to IV, a common field of search is appropriate for the examination of such Groups. Applicants submit that the claims of such Groups are each directed to a method of operating a gaming device generally including, amongst other elements, the same searchable subject matter as displaying a playing board having a plurality of positions and enabling each of a plurality of chips to be placed individually at one of the positions, the chips being either game chips or player chips, wherein placement of one of the game chips that causes at least one player chip to be flanked on opposite sides by game chips converts each the flanked player chip to a game chip, and wherein placement of one of the player chips that causes at least one game chip to be flanked on opposite sides by player chips converts each the flanked game chip to a player chip. Accordingly, Applicants do not believe that an examination of such claimed subject matter of Groups I to IV together would place an


undue burden on the Examiner. Therefore, Applicants respectfully request that the restriction requirement of Groups I to IV as distinct species be reconsidered and withdrawn.

Additionally, Applicants submit that, due to the similarities of the claims of at least Groups V to VII, a common field of search is appropriate for the examination of such Groups. Applicants submit that the claims of such Groups are each directed to a gaming device generally including, amongst other elements, the same searchable subject matter as a playing board having a plurality of positions and a plurality of chips operable to be placed individually in one of the positions, the chips showing either a first side or a second side, wherein placement of one of the first side chips that causes at least one second side chip to be flanked on opposite sides by first side chips converts each the flanked second side chip to a first side chip, and wherein placement of one of the second side chips that causes at least one first side chip to be flanked on opposite sides by second side chips converts each the flanked first side chip to a second side chip. Accordingly, Applicants do not believe that an examination of such claimed subject matter of Groups V to VII together would place an undue burden on the Examiner. Therefore, Applicants respectfully request that the restriction requirement of Groups V to VII as distinct species be reconsidered and withdrawn.

Favorable consideration is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date: June 21, 2007